

# **Update on English Language Learner Education in Massachusetts**

## **The RETELL Initiative: Rethinking Equity & Teaching for English Language Learners**

Massachusetts Department of  
ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY  
EDUCATION

**Presentation to the  
Board of Elementary &  
Secondary Education,  
February 27, 2012**

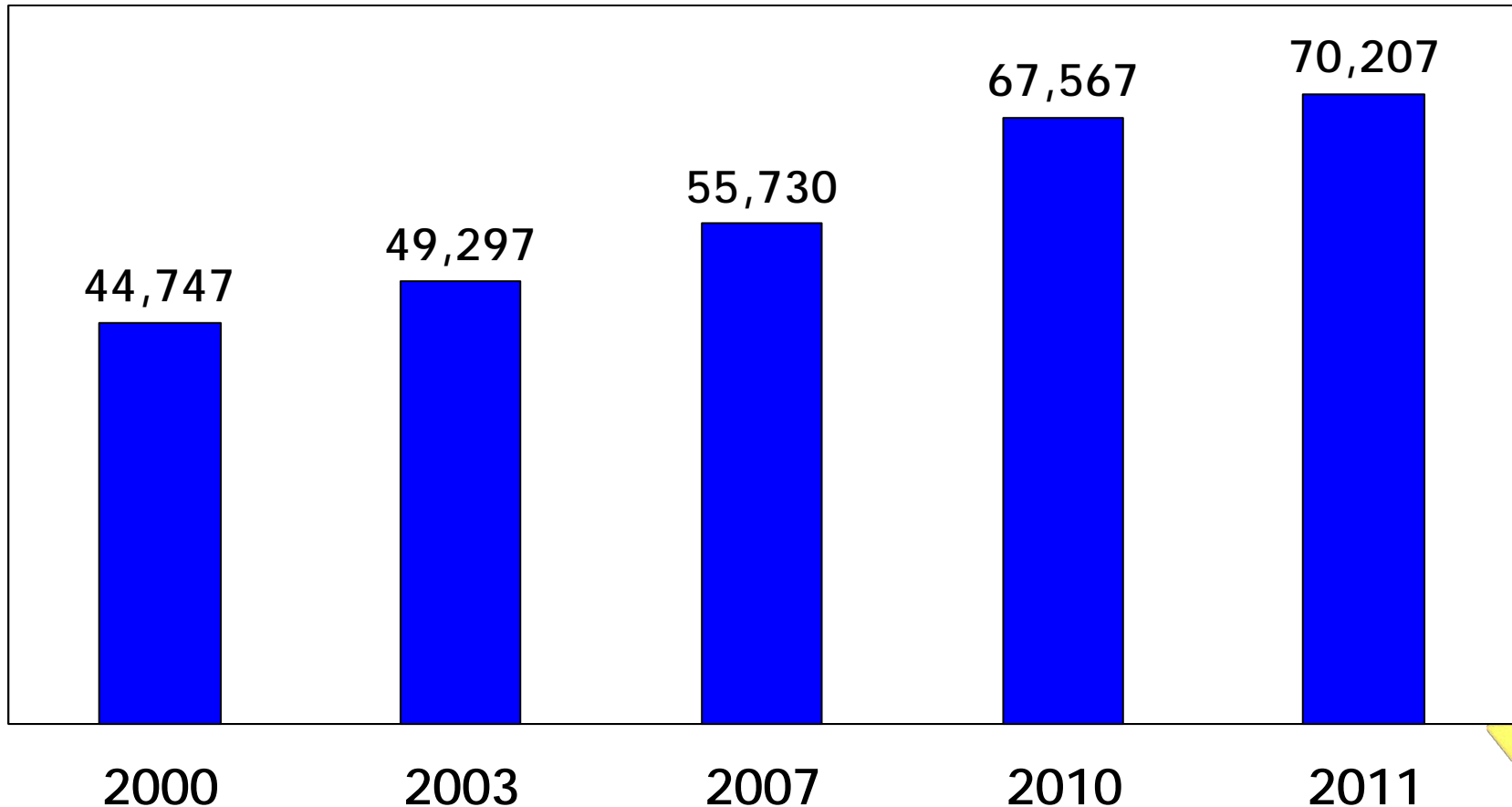


# Background

- ★ English language learners are an important focus of the Board's Proficiency Gap Task Force
- ★ Closing this proficiency gap depends on teachers having the skills and knowledge necessary to instruct ELLs
- ★ RETELL initiative aims to strengthen teaching and learning for ELLs
- ★ Given the growth of the ELL student population, all educators can expect to work with ELLs at some point in their careers



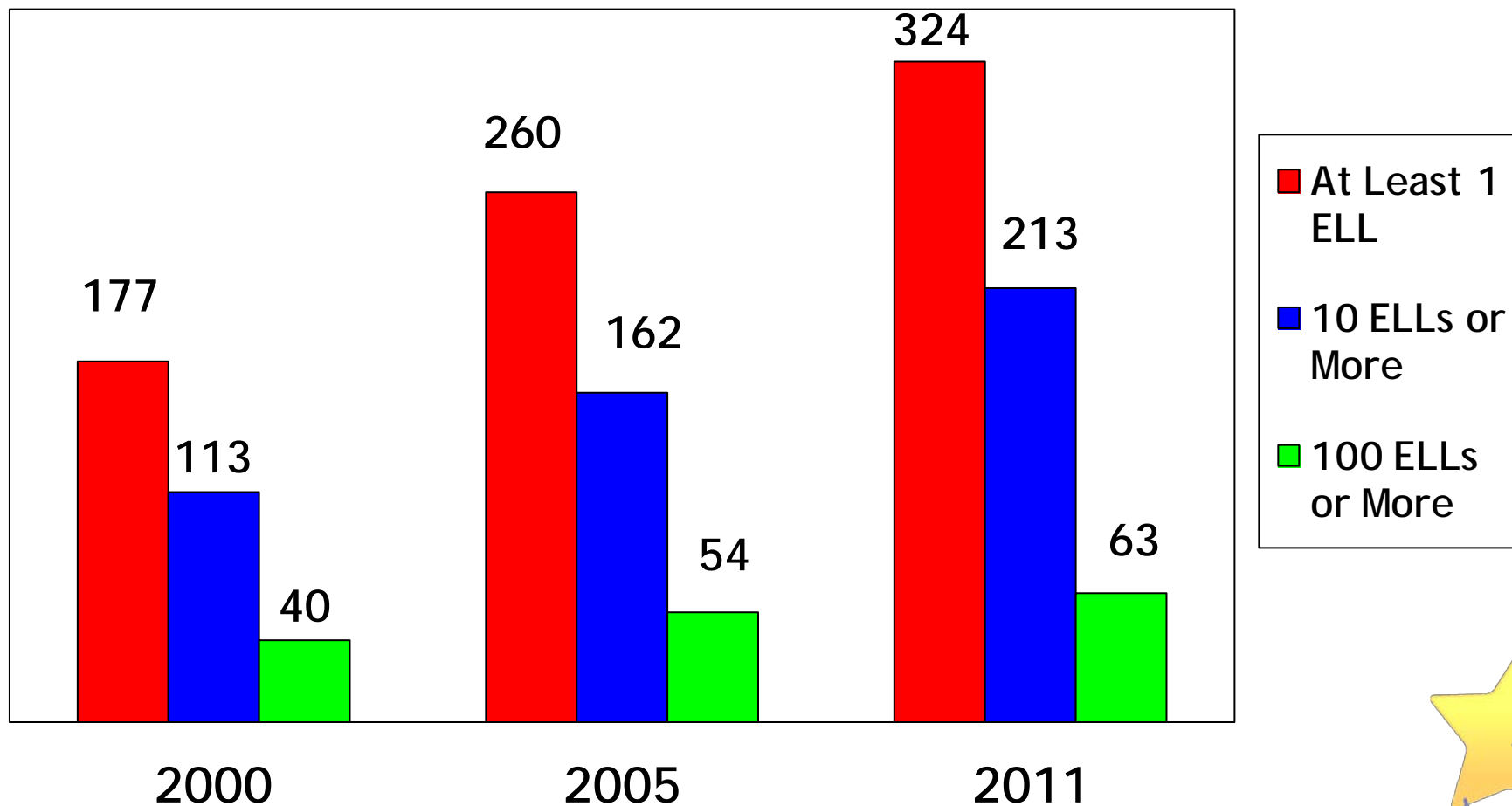
# ELL Enrollment Statewide is Over 70,000 and Has Increased 57% Since 2000



This trend indicates that by 2021, ~20% of all MA students K-12 will be ELLs



# The Number of MA Districts Enrolling at Least One ELL Nearly Doubled between 2000 & 2011



# Two Components of ELL Education

- ★ **English as a Second Language (ESL)** – The teaching of the English language to ELLs
- ★ **Sheltered English Immersion (SEI)** – An approach to teaching academic content in English to ELLs
  - ★ Generally, but not always, ELLs are in the same classrooms as native English-speaking students



# Licensure

- ★ Knowledge and professional standards are in place for English as a Second Language (ESL) Teachers
- ★ No standards specific to teaching Sheltered English Immersion (SEI)
  - ★ Category trainings were recommended but not required
    - ★ Introduced teachers to concepts of SEI and ELL education
    - ★ Needed to be revamped to reflect updated research in the field
    - ★ DOJ says state has duty to mandate preparation and training for SEI teachers



# Three Touchstones for RETELL Initiative

- ★ Benefit ELLs by strengthening their instructional program
- ★ Grounded in sound research on educational practice
- ★ Feasible to implement on a large scale



# **Proposed Changes to SEI Instruction and Licensure**





# SEI Instruction

For core academic teachers responsible for teaching ELLs and the administrators who supervise them, the proposed “Education of English Learners” regulations would establish:

- ★ A four year timetable, from July 2012 through June 2016 to earn the SEI Teacher or SEI Administrator Endorsement
  - ★ High incidence/low performing districts earlier
  - ★ Low incidence/higher performing districts later
- ★ Core academic teachers of ELLs must hold SEI Endorsement to teach ELLs after June 2016



# SEI Endorsement

- ★ Obtained through ESE-approved course of study or its equivalent
- ★ All core academic teachers: Early childhood, elementary, teachers of students with moderate and severe disabilities, teachers of English, reading, language arts, mathematics, science, civics and government, economics, history and geography
- ★ SEI Administrator Endorsement: Administrators who supervise and evaluate core academic teachers



# Knowledge & Professional Practice Standards

- ★ Focus on literacy, academic language development, second language acquisition, socio-cultural and socio-emotional issues
- ★ Concepts will strengthen teaching of all students, not just ELLs
- ★ Incorporated into:
  - ★ model course of study
  - ★ related assessments
  - ★ approval of educator prep programs
  - ★ standards for educator licensure and license renewal



# Educator Preparation

- ★ New SEI knowledge standards will be embedded in every relevant preparation program by July 2013
- ★ Eventually, every educator who graduates from a preparation program in Massachusetts will have earned the SEI endorsement



# Licensure Changes

Effective 7/1/14, All Core Academic Teachers:

- ★ Preliminary License: Complete SEI endorsement before advancing to initial license
- ★ Temporary License: must complete SEI endorsement before advancing to initial license
- ★ Initial License: must complete SEI endorsement to qualify for initial license
- ★ Professional License: must complete SEI endorsement to qualify for professional license



# License Renewal Changes

- ★ 150 Professional Development Points (PDPs) needed to renew an educator license:
  - ★ 15 PDPs related to ESL/SEI
  - ★ 15 PDPs related to instruction of students with disabilities
  - ★ 90 PDPS in content or content-based pedagogy
  - ★ 30 PDPs in an elective
- ★ Same PD Plan can be used for educator evaluation



# Implementation Plan

- ★ Continued discussions with Department of Justice
- ★ Continued conferencing with Commissioner's Panel
- ★ Outreach to stakeholders
- ★ Pilot Course – Summer 2012
- ★ Course roll-out – Fall 2012
  - ★ Will begin with high need districts
- ★ July 2016 – all ELLs taught by SEI endorsed teacher



# Budget

- ★ Estimated cost to prepare 25,000 SEI teachers and administrators – \$7 million over four years (best case estimate)
- ★ Exploring use of federal funds





# Additional Components of RETELL

- ★ SEI coaching – to support and strengthen instructional practice in the classroom
- ★ Data systems and evaluation – to assess and report on progress
- ★ Review current educator license requirements for English as a Second Language (ESL) license – may propose revisions in March



# **World Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA)**

- ★ New system of standards, curriculum and instruction for ELLs – aligned to new MA curriculum frameworks adopted by Board in 2010 – through multi-state consortium
- ★ New English language proficiency state assessment – ACCESS – aligned with these standards, beginning January 2013
- ★ Technical assistance provided to districts



# Concluding Thoughts

- ★ ELLs are the fastest growing student population in the nation
- ★ Category training provided us with a more sophisticated understanding of essential skills and knowledge for teachers of ELLs
- ★ Additional insights into promising practices in ELL education
- ★ RETELL initiative is key to closing proficiency gaps – and integral to our education reform agenda

